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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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INSIDE

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Atlanta event promotes book by Chinese-Cuban generals

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'We're workers, not criminals'

Over half million protest anti-immigrant bill in L.A. Marches, high school walkouts spread across U.S.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

LOS ANGELES—"We're workers, not criminals," read signs carried by a sea of protesters here March 25. Working people, overwhelmingly immigrants, began arriving early in the morning for the march. Tens of thousands were still marching well into the afternoon.

It was the largest rally so far across the country to oppose HR 4437, the Sensenbrenner bill, which was passed by the House of Representatives in December. This bill makes it a felony to be in the United States without proper documents and makes it a crime for anyone to "aid" undocumented immigrants. Some 12 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States today, or 5 percent of the workforce.

According to police estimates more than 500,000 people poured into the streets that day here to express outrage at the bill—the largest demonstration the city has ever seen. Organizers said that up to 1 million turned out.

During the month of March, hundreds of thousands of immigrants and other working people have mobilized across the country to oppose HR 4437 and other anti-immigrant measures.

The march here was widely publicized in the Spanish-language media. While contingents came from immigrant rights groups, unions, and other organizations, the vast majority of marchers were workers and young people who came on their own. Originally scheduled to go up Broadway to City Hall, the protest not

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Reuters/Lucas Jackson

Over 500,000 people march in Los Angeles March 25 against bill passed by House of Representatives that would make it a felony to be in U.S. without proper documents.

Puerto Rico congress opens, demanding decolonization

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, March 28—The First National Congress for Decolonization opened here today. The three-day event, held at the University of Puerto Rico campus, has drawn scores of students as well as academics and political activists. It was initiated by the National Council for Decolonization (CONADE), recently formed by sup-

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...As we go to press

FBI rearrests Antonio Camacho

Protests called in San Juan & N.Y.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico, March 29—Student and other organizations here organized an emergency demonstration today to protest the arrest yesterday afternoon of longtime Puerto Rican independence fighter Antonio Camacho by FBI agents. Camacho was detained

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Farm group in Wisconsin sends tractors to farmers in South hit by storms

BY ZENA BAILEY

MUSCODA, Wisconsin, March 28—Family Farm Defenders (FFD) held a news conference here today at the farm of Randy Jasper, a dairy farmer and member of the group, announcing that FFD is sending five tractors to farmers in the Gulf Coast affected by last year's storms. Jasper said the group succeeded in acquiring and repairing the tractors, which he and other farmers loaded onto a semi. Jasper said he would drive the semi the next day and was planning to deliver

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Meeting set to celebrate life of SWP leader Clifton DeBerry

BY JOEL BRITTON

SAN FRANCISCO—A meeting will be held here on April 29 to celebrate the life and political contributions of Clifton DeBerry, who died of heart failure March 24 in a hospital near his home in Union City, California. He was 82 years old.

DeBerry was a longtime leader of the Socialist Workers Party. As the party's

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Clifton DeBerry, appearing on NBC TV in a N.Y. mayoral debate, October 1965.

Also Inside:

Ottawa seeks to boost support for Canadian troops in Afghanistan

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

TORONTO—The capitalist rulers of this country are using the deaths of several Canadian soldiers to wage a nationalist campaign in support of the Canadian military deployment in Afghanistan. Canada, with 2,200 troops in southern Afghanistan, has the NATO-assigned command of the occupation force in the Kandahar region.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper landed in Kandahar March 12 for a three-day surprise visit to Canadian troops. It was his first trip abroad since the electoral victory of the Conservative Party in January.

His action underlined a shift in Canadian military and foreign policy that is supported by all the parliamentary parties in Ottawa.

Harper said his government's troops were there to defend "Canada's national interests" against "terrorist" threats from al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

"I don't think there's a better example in decades of Canada really standing up, going to the front line and articulating our values," he said. "Developing democracy, advancing the rights of the women, and the education of children. These are great Canadian values."

During his trip Canadian soldiers who have been severely wounded, and relatives of soldiers who died in Afghanistan recently, came out in favor of the presence of Canadian troops there.

Leaders of the Liberal Party, whose government sent the troops to Afghanistan in February 2002, have expressed continued support for their presence there.

Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party, a labor party with social-democratic leadership, said on March 3 that Canadian soldiers "put their lives on the line to serve our country, and to further the pursuit of peace, justice, and democracy around the world."

The Bloc Quebecois, which favors Quebec independence, said in a March 6 press release that it "does not in the least put into question the legitimacy of the mission entrusted to Canadian troops in Afghanistan."

Richard Hillier, who leads Canadian forces as Chief of the Defense Staff, visited the *Globe and Mail*'s editorial board on March 2. General Hillier, the paper's editors wrote the following day, "must lead the transformation of the military from an underfunded, underequipped Cold War relic...to a modern force that can rebuild failed states and fight insurgents in places such as Afghanistan." We are coming "out of a decade of darkness," Hillier said.



Associated Press/Noor Khan

Canadian troops on patrol March 3 in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

The combat experience gained by Canadian troops around Kandahar, their biggest combat experience since the Korean war, is at the heart of this transformation of the Canadian army. It is a key element of Ottawa's response to growing competition from Washington and other imperialist powers.

Under both Liberals and Conservatives, the Canadian government has acted to defend the interests of its ruling class against their rivals in the framework of Ottawa being a secondary imperialist power.

The new Conservative Party government seeks to deepen collaboration with the U.S. military, in particular through military alliances such as NATO and the North American Aerospace Defense Command. Harper said his government might reverse the previous government's refusal to be part of a U.S. antimissile shield.

At the same time, Harper is pushing for Ottawa to play a more prominent and independent military role abroad, and the Afghanistan mission is key to this effort. His government also promised to increase military budgets and—against Washington's opposition—to defend Canadian control of the Arctic seaways.

Meeting set to celebrate life of Clifton DeBerry

Continued from front page

1964 candidate for president of the United States, he was the first African American to be nominated and to run for that office.

A militant young worker in the 1940s, DeBerry participated in union-organizing drives in the South and labor struggles in Chicago. While working at the International Harvester plant on Chicago's west side, he became a figure in the Farm Equipment Workers union and joined the Communist Party. After breaking from the Stalinist movement, DeBerry joined the SWP in 1953. He was elected to the party's National Committee in 1957 and served on it and on the party's Control Commission for 25 years.

Faced with mounting health problems, DeBerry dropped his membership in the party by the early 1990s, but remained a loyal supporter.

DeBerry participated in the rise of the civil rights movement, helping to organize a mass protest meeting in Chicago in response to the 1955 lynching of Emmett Till in Mississippi. During the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955–56, he worked with others to organize the Station Wagons to Montgomery Committee that raised funds to purchase vehicles for use by the boycotters.

As the SWP candidate for president, DeBerry supported the Freedom Now Party centered in Michigan, as an example of independent working-class political action in opposition to the Republican and Democratic parties. He lauded Malcolm X's declaration in March 1964 that he would seek to develop, as the *Militant* reported, "black nationalist political strength and would actively support the civil-rights struggle." DeBerry spoke out in defense of the Cuban Revolution, in support of African liberation struggles, and demanded withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam.

DeBerry joined civil rights marches in Selma, Alabama, in Memphis, Tennessee, and elsewhere. He co-authored

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Indonesian cops attack protesters in W. Papua

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—As protests against the U.S. mining company Freeport-McMoRan Gold and Copper erupted in West Papua in February and March, Indonesian security forces occupying the region went on the rampage. They beat and imprisoned students, workers, and others involved in the protests.

Freeport, the owner of the world's largest gold mine, has long been a target of mass opposition by the people of West Papua, who are waging a struggle for national independence and for control of the region's rich mineral resources. West Papua, the western half of the island of New Guinea, was wrested by Indonesia from the Dutch government—the former colonial power—in the early 1960s. The eastern half of the island is the nation of Papua New Guinea.

Renewed protests began in late February after West Papuans rejected attempts by mine officials to bar several hundred local families from continuing to pan for gold in the waste left over from the mine.

On February 22 hundreds of people set up barricades on the road to the mine, defying the 400 police and soldiers stationed at the mine complex and forcing its shutdown for several days.

Hundreds of people in the West Papuan capital of Jayapura organized a protest March 16 at Cendrawasih University, defending themselves with stones against cops equipped with teargas and guns. Among the security forces, several cops of the hated Mobile Brigade and an Air Force officer were killed. Human rights activist Aloy Renwarin said police gunfire had killed two Papuans.

There are 50,000 Indonesian soldiers and police in the province of 800,000 people.



Reuters

Indonesian riot police block protesters in Jayapura, West Papua, March 16, demanding the closure of a giant mine run by U.S. firm Freeport-McMoRan Gold & Copper.

That same evening, cops launched a series of raids on student dormitories, forcing thousands to flee. "Our dormitory was spared but we were afraid to return," Martha Diekmi, who lives in a dormitory for members of the Amungme Kamoro tribe, told the *Jakarta Post*. On March 18 cops stationed on the road to the Jayapura airport fired into the air and "pulled people from cars and beat them," AP reported.

The police held and interrogated 67 people in their sweep following the deaths. The national police chief said 14 people had been named suspects and locked up, including a leader of the West Papua Referendum Front.

One week after the student-led protest, a mudslide at the mine site smashed into a dining area, killing at least three workers and hospitalizing 27 others. "There is no impact to Freeport production," said a mine company official.

"PT Freeport must not be closed down," said Defense Minister Juwono Sudarsono after the earlier protests. The mine is the biggest contributor to the government's tax income, he said. Furthermore, the closure would "create doubts among foreign companies to invest in Indonesia."

ExxonMobil is one company that has invested in the impoverished country of 240 million people. The U.S. oil giant announced in mid-March that it had signed a deal with the government-run oil company Pertamina to exploit an oil field near Cepu, in the east of Java. Press reports indicate ExxonMobil will have a 45 percent interest in the field, much higher than the previous norm.

Change to Win Federation holds convention

BY CHRIS REMPLE AND BECCA WILLIAMSON

LAS VEGAS, Nevada—More than 2,000 unionists met here March 20–22 at the first organizing convention of the Change to Win Federation. They heard presentations and joined smaller breakout sessions to discuss organizing more workers into trade unions.

Many of the participants were staff members from the seven unions that form the federation—UNITE HERE, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the Laborers International Union, the United Farm Workers (UFW), and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters. Change to Win was founded September 27 at a one-day convention after the executive boards of these unions left the AFL-CIO.

A central theme of the convention was organizing the 50 million workers whose jobs "cannot be outsourced," as literature promoting the event put it.

Key campaigns promoted at the convention included organizing workers at the Smithfield plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, into the UFCW. Two unionists in this fight, Lorena Ramos and Edward Morrison, addressed the convention. Morrison explained that he and his co-workers process 4,000 hogs in a seven-hour day. The plant as a whole kills 30,000 hogs a day. Joseph Hansen, international president of the UFCW, said the campaign includes signing up workers, community outreach, corporate and financial pressure, and reaching out to other unions, including internationally.

Chuck Mack, vice president, western region, of the Teamsters, described conditions faced by port truck drivers: long hours, unsafe jobs, low pay, and no benefits. He pointed out that port truck drivers are classed as "independent contractors" and are legally barred from union organization.

Sandro Lerro, a driver at the port of Miami, explained that loads are frequently unbalanced and that the low pay makes maintenance of his truck impossible. "I can pay my rent *or* buy tires for my truck," he said. "Safety is not just my problem. It's your problem."

A video produced by the Teamsters celebrated the cancellation of the sale of several port operations to Dubai Ports World. The video quoted one woman at a Teamsters rally who denounced "the sale of our ports to an Arab company." The video used American nationalism and anti-Arab chauvinism to celebrate a "victory over George Bush."

John Wilhelm, president of Hospitality Industry of UNITE HERE, outlined the Hotel Workers Rising campaign. He introduced Angela Bird, a bartender at the Glendale Hilton. Bird explained that when she and other union activists "went public," the company began a campaign of harassment against them. Workers there and at a number of Los Angeles hotels near the airport organized groups to go to management to demand an end to harassment on the job, which included searching personal bags of employees and using hired security guards to follow them around at work.

Wilhelm said the Hotel Workers Rising campaign will organize a series of rallies in 20 cities in June. The Change to Win Federation plans a week of actions April 24–28 to advance its major campaigns—organizing Smithfield workers in North Carolina, Cintas industrial laundries, port truck drivers, and school bus drivers. They also opposed the expansion of Wal-Mart, without mentioning any attempts to unionize workers there.

General Motors announces sweeping job cuts

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

General Motors and the United Auto Workers (UAW) announced an agreement March 22 that allows the company to sharply reduce the number of jobs at the world's largest automaker. The Special Attrition Program leaves it up to each individual among a workforce of more than 110,000 to choose between early retirement, a buyout package, or staying on at the declining automaker.

The auto parts manufacturer Delphi is also party to the deal. Because Delphi is in bankruptcy proceedings, the agreement is subject to approval by the court. UAW members have no vote on the layoff plan.

Auto workers who give up their job through either retirement or a buyout will receive a payment of $35,000 to $140,000 each, depending on seniority and other factors. Those who accept a buyout will get the largest sums, but in exchange forfeit all medical and pension benefits other than those already vested.

The *Detroit News* reported a sense of relief among some of the 113,000 unionists at GM—down from 228,000 in 1990. "In one Flint plant, employees cheered and danced on the factory floor," the paper said. "I'll fly out of here in a heartbeat," said Demetrius Dumont, who has worked 30 years at GM.

Others said that they expect to face even more concessions. "I don't think that I'm really ready to retire, but I'll do what I have to," Delphi worker Kelly Saunders told the *News*, indicating he'd accept the buyout. "If they take me down to $12.50 [per hour], that's going to hurt."

The day after the deal to slash jobs was announced, General Motors Acceptance Corp. (GMAC), the company's financial division, completed the sale of a 78 percent stake in its commercial mortgage business. GM projected this would result in a nearly $9 billion cash infusion into its coffers. GM is reportedly negotiating to sell a controlling stake in the entire GMAC operation. In 2004, 80 percent of GM's revenue came from GMAC.

Since last May, when leading credit agencies downgraded GM stock to junk bond status, the threat of bankruptcy has been hanging over the heads of unionists at the company.

When GM announced its intention to cut the workforce by 30,000 jobs last November, UAW tops agreed to concessions in health coverage for active workers and retirees, in the name of "saving jobs," and deferred cost-of-living adjustments and wage increases. The just-agreed-to attrition package will result in an estimated loss of tens of thousands of jobs.

Last October, Delphi—the largest auto parts producer in the country, which GM spun off in 1999—filed for bankruptcy. Company executives want to void the union contract in order to slash wages by more than 50 percent and impose cuts in medical coverage, vacation, and other benefits. The UAW represents 25,000 Delphi workers at 38 plants in the United States.

Only 35 percent of auto workers are unionized today, compared to 65 percent in the mid-1970s, the Associated Press reports. This is partly due to the fact that few organizing campaigns have succeeded among the growing number of auto plants in the South, where one-third of all U.S. auto production is now located. Seeking to aid the auto barons in their drive to bust the UAW, companies like Toyota, Daimler Chrysler, and others have opened factories in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas.

Even with the latest round of cuts agreed to by the UAW, the big-business press points out GM may very well file for bankruptcy in order to augment concessions. Barry Bosworth of the Brookings Institution told the *Chicago Tribune* that the attrition plan is "a prelude to bankruptcy" because it shifts GM's payments from operating costs to its retirement plan, "costs that can be shed in the event of a future bankruptcy."

Meeting at union hall in St. Paul defends labor rights



Militant/Brian Taylor

Panel of speakers at March 25 meeting at UFCW Local 789 union hall in South St. Paul, Minnesota. Speaking is Phil Qualy. Seated from right, Bernie Hesse, Argiris Malapanis, Bill Estrada (partly obsured), Randy Jasper, Mike Klemm, and Mark Nowack.

BY BECKY ELLIS

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—"We are not going to let the *Militant* go under, or miners fighting to organize and their union be attacked!" Phil Qualy, Minnesota state legislative director for the United Transportation Union (UTU) told some 60 unionists, students, and others at a meeting held here March 25 at the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789 hall. It was called to defend labor rights and benefit the Militant Fighting Fund. Qualy gave the fund pitch as part of a panel of speakers. "This is our struggle," he said. "Contributing to it is an honorable thing."

The fund was established to help the *Militant* defend itself against a harassment lawsuit by C.W. Mining—owner of the Co-Op mine near Huntington, Utah—and its affiliated International Association of United Workers Union. The Militant Fighting Fund is also publicizing the fight of the other defendants, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and 16 former Co-Op miners who have fought to win UMWA representation.

Bernie Hesse, director of organizing for UFCW Local 789, moderated the event. Those attending hailed from areas throughout the Midwest, including Des Moines, Iowa; Muscoda, Wisconsin; Austin, Minnesota; and Chicago. John Studer, a member of UNITE HERE Local 10 in Philadelphia who is the executive director of the Militant Fighting Fund, was also present.

Half a dozen members of Local 789 took part. Five members of Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) Local 33, which represents mechanics, cleaners, and custodians who have been on strike here against Northwest Airlines since last summer, also attended, including local president Ted Ludwig. Ken Hooker, president of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1833, which organizes baggage handlers and customer service agents at Northwest here, was present too.

About a dozen youth from this area attended. One decided to come after meeting supporters of the Militant Fighting Fund earlier that afternoon at a rally outside a Minneapolis hotel against the "termites"—construction contractors who don't pay overtime and are notorious for other antilabor practices. Some 70 people attended the protest. Among the speakers was Bill Estrada, a former Co-Op miner, one of the leaders of the fight to win UMWA representation at that mine, and a defendant in the C.W. Mining retaliatory suit. He spoke about the Utah miners' unionizing struggle and appealed for support to the Militant Fighting Fund. When the bucket was passed around, unionists there donated $478 to the fund.

How struggle began

"When we told the press that we only made $6 an hour, that there were no bathrooms or locker rooms for women, that there was defective equipment and unsafe working conditions, that we were treated without dignity—the bosses claim we were defaming them," Estrada told the audience at the Local 789 hall. "They say that we were racketeering by raising money to support our fight for UMWA representation. They are trying to turn the tables—make us into the criminals and the bosses into the victims."

Some 75 Co-Op miners, many originally from Mexico, began a fight in 2003 to be represented by the UMWA. After C.W. Mining locked out miners who walked off the job in September of that year to protest the firing of a union supporter, the workers turned the lockout into a strike that lasted nearly 10 months. The miners won widespread solidarity in the United States and other countries.

In June 2004 the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) brokered a settlement between the company and the UMWA, and strikers were offered reinstatement. The attorney speaking for the company at a February 17 court hearing on the C.W. Mining suit said the employers didn't expect most workers to go back. But many miners returned, forcing the NLRB to organize a union representation election in December 2004. Leading up to that, the bosses fired most miners, claiming they didn't have proper work documents. The company made this an issue for the first time on the eve of the election.

When you organize, win support, and make gains, the bosses strike back, said Estrada. C.W. Mining filed its civil suit against the workers, the UMWA, newspapers, including the *Militant*, and others on charges that include defamation and conspiracy to defraud the company.

Estrada quoted statements by UMWA attorneys at the February 17 hearing, taken from the court transcript. This lawsuit "was intended to chill the press and chill the organizing efforts, and not only of the workers at C.W. Mining but elsewhere within the state and within the country," Judy Rivlin, the UMWA's general counsel, told the court. "It has been a heavy hand at trying to stifle the organizational rights of these employees."

Aim of suit to intimidate miners

Richard Rosenblat, a UMWA attorney representing the 16 miners, told the court the company served the charges on the miners "as they were entering the election booth to decide whether or not to vote for the United Mine Workers. The real purpose behind this complaint against the individual miners was nothing more than to intimidate them in their attempting to exercise their democratic rights."

Most of the miners who took part in this struggle have not left the country to go back to Mexico but remain in the area and have gotten other jobs, including in area coal mines. Estrada noted that a delegation of former Co-Op miners have been invited to attend the upcoming UMWA convention in early April. And some of these miners are helping to build a conference of women miners on the struggle against discrimination and sexual harassment on the job.

The recent court hearing in Salt Lake City on the C.W. Mining lawsuit reflected the relationship of class forces in this country, marked the first two months of this year by the deaths of 24 miners in the United States, said *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis. He pointed out that Federal Judge Dee Benson said at the February 17 hearing that he would grant the motions to dismiss the charges against the two main dailies in Utah, the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Morning News,* but he needed more time to decide on similar motions by the *Militant* and the other defendants. The only major remaining defendants now are the UMWA and its officers, the 16 miners, and the *Militant*, its editor, and several of its reporters.

"This is clearly a labor defense case," Malapanis said. "It is about the right of workers to tell their story, which includes exposing and opposing brutal conditions on the job, and winning support. It's about the right of a union like the UMWA to put out press releases about an organizing campaign without fear it will be charged with slander. It's about the right of a newspaper to accurately and consistently quote workers fighting to organize, including sometimes anonymously because of real fear of being fired, and about making sure workers can have a voice *before* people are killed on the job, not after someone dies."

Defend labor rights, free press

Mike Klem, national strike chairman of the AMFA walkout, said that when striking mechanics put up a picket line in front of the hotel housing scabs, Northwest Airlines filed a lawsuit against AMFA claiming the mechanics had damaged their business. "They were trying to scare us, drain our resources. Fortunately, in our case the judge dismissed the suit," he said.

"It would appear that C.W. Mining cares less about the workers' standard of living than its profits. And with growing opposition to its anti-union practices, they launch this lawsuit against the UMWA, the miners, and even our own *Militant* newspaper. We need to defend our newspaper. Free speech, freedom of the press is the core of what our country was founded on. This attack cannot be tolerated."

Randy Jasper, a farmer from Wisconsin, got applause when he announced that Family Farm Defenders would send tractors to help farmers in the South affected by last year's storms (see adjacent article). "This lawsuit against the *Militant* and the other defendants is just the tip of the iceberg," he said. "If we lose this one there will be more attacks down the line. Now is the time to build solidarity."

Mark Nowak, a professor at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, closed the program with a presentation on his recent trip to an area near Sago, West Virginia, where 12 miners died in January.

Participants contributed some $1,600 to the Militant Fighting Fund.

Brian Taylor contributed to this article.

Farm group sends tractors to aid farmers in Gulf

Continued from front page

the load to the Federation of Southern Cooperatives in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, on March 30.

Family Farm Defenders, a Wisconsin group of farmers and consumers, began appealing for tractors to be donated, or financial contributions to purchase them, months ago. Its purpose was to aid the federation, a group of southern farmers who are Black and are fighting to hold onto their land.

"They lost their crop, they lost their market, and they still don't have electricity. And they have not seen anyone from FEMA," Jasper said, referring to the Federal Emergency Management Agency in charge of government relief efforts.

FFD president John Kinsman said southern farmers have suffered many disasters, including discrimination and low prices. He pointed out that Wisconsin farmers are also affected by low prices, but they have found that farmers in Mississippi and Louisiana are in more dire straits. That's why the group organized "Project Tractor."

"On behalf of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Mississippi Farmers Association of Cooperatives, and the Indian Spring Farmers Association, we greatly appreciate your assistance," wrote Ben Burkett in a statement read to the media. "Many small farmers and farm families throughout Mississippi were greatly affected due to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Many farmers lost everything—homes, livestock, equipment, and mainly a way of living…. Your contributions…will impact the lives of many. Your generosity cannot be measured."

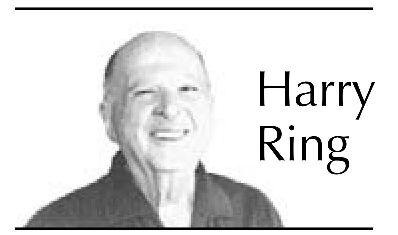
Farmers here made valiant efforts to ready the tractors. Julian Greeno and his son Joel said they put a rebuilt engine into a tractor only to find out that the transmission was out. So they worked all night taking the engine out again and placing it into another tractor. Another farmer, Don Hansen, traveled eight hours one way to buy one of the tractors.

The tractors Jasper and Hank Rosenbalm—another FFD member—were taking south are of a size that will best suit the Mississippi farms, Jasper said. One large tractor will be held jointly by the cooperatives and lent out as needed to individual farmers.

Jasper was planning to arrive in Mississippi just in time for the Family Farm Defenders National Convention, which is hosted this year by the Mississippi Federation of Cooperatives. The event is titled "Sowing Farmer to Farmer Solidarity."

As of the time of the press conference—which was covered by the Madison-based TV Channel 3, *Muscoda Dial, Richland Observer,* and another paper from nearby Dodgeville—two more tractors had been donated, foreshadowing a second load.

Doesn't Chevron sell cheap at pump?—An audit by the government of Venezuela shows that giant Chevron oil owes Venezu-



ela $43.1 million in back taxes.

Judges and mine owners—true love—The Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals dismissed the case of Jerry Hall. Allegedly Hall was fired from his job as a miner in Kentucky by Consolidated Coal. He had taken photos of mine equipment to show how his co-worker, Carter Martin, who is seeking workers' comp, was injured on the job. While Martin's claim is pending, the court has upheld the firing of Hall for snapping photos.

How creative—"Los Angeles has cleanup plan—50-block area would get dozens more cops"—News headline.

The march of civilization—"Madison, Wisconsin—The State Department of Corrections will no longer shackle inmates during childbirth."—News item.

The great society—"Picher, Oklahoma—A school playground that also serves as a community park is in danger of collapsing because it sits on top of an abandoned mine cavern, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers warned. A corps geologist said the elementary school playground had a 20 percent to 50 percent chance of collapsing. The Picher area has been undermined by decades of lead and zinc mining."—News item.

Business is business—Rosa Parks became an historic figure when she sparked a successful 1955 fight against the Jim Crow segregation of Black bus riders who had been required to yield their seats to whites in Montgomery, Alabama. With her recent death in Detroit, she was buried in a Woodlawn crypt. Those who also wish to be buried there face skyrocketing fees. According to a news account, Parks and some of her relatives were interred free in a spot priced at $17,000. The market price for current burial range, according to location, from some $25,000 to $65,000.

They're in mourning?—Syndicated columnist Lloyd Grove did a scathing account of the parties thrown by billionaire Wilbur Ross in the immediate wake of the catastrophic January 2 explosion at Ross's Sago Mine in West Virginia that killed 12 miners and left another in a coma. "Mr. Ross moves in different circles," commented a United Mine Workers Union spokesperson. The *New York Daily News* headlined the article: "Old King Coal still a merry old soul."

ON THE PICKET LINE

France: student protests, strikes oppose antilabor law

Protests in France over a proposed labor law that would make it easier for employers to fire young workers spread to more than 70 cities March 28. More than a million people, according to police estimates, joined actions organized by student groups and trade unions, shutting down schools, and some government offices and businesses. Cops used tear gas and water cannons to shut down some demonstrations in Paris.

The jobless rate for youth under the age of 30 is 25 percent. The First Employment Contract (CPE) allows bosses to fire workers under the age of 26 for any reason during their first two years on the job.

"Job opportunities are scarce, because countries with a lower standard of living than France are attracting all the jobs," Feliciene Morlet, a 22-year-old sociology student in Paris, told the press. "And the only solution that de Villepin offers is a law that makes it easier to fire us so even if we get a job it isn't really a job."

—Arrin Hawkins

Locked-out paper workers rally in Nova Scotia, Canada

PORT HAWKESBURY, Nova Scotia—Two thousand locked-out workers at Stora Enso—one of the largest paper companies in the world—and other unionists marched through the streets of this Cape Breton town of 4,000 people on March 18. A big majority of the 540 locked-out members of Communication, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) Local 972 joined the spirited march and rally. One young woman made her own colorful sign decorated with balloons that read: "Port Hawkesbury is and will remain a union town." Workers on the picket line said that contracting out is the key issue in dispute.

"This strike has been really great for us. It was like we were two different companies before the strike—operations and maintenance. We never knew what each other's problems were. Now we're all together," said Peter MacIntyre, with 38 years in the plant.

—Beverly Bernardo

New Zealand: Fast food workers march for pay raise

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Chanting "Two, four, six, eight, super size my pay rate," 300 fast food restaurant workers marched here March 18. The action was part of the SuperSizeMyPay .Com campaign, organized by the Unite union around demands to increase the minimum wage to NZ$12 an hour (US$7.30), abolish youth rates, and set regular hours of work. Two days later a group called Radical Youth organized an action with Unite in which 500 high school students left their classrooms to march in central Auckland for the pay raise campaign.

Unite members have staged a series of two-hour walkouts at KFC, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Starbucks and McDonalds outlets in Auckland and Wellington. Restaurant Brands, owner of KFC, Pizza Hut, and Starbucks brands in New Zealand, has proposed phasing out youth rates in its latest contract offer to the union.

—Terry Coggan

Laborers halt work in Dubai



Associated Press/Victor Romero

Hundreds of construction workers in Dubai, building Burj Dubai Tower, halted work March 21 to protest poor pay and work conditions. Laborers in Dubai have held at least eight major strikes since September.

DeBerry

Continued from Page 2

the pamphlets *Marxism and the Negro Struggle* and *Murder in Memphis—Martin Luther King and the Future of the Black Liberation Struggle.*

Several months ago, this reporter visited with DeBerry and his companion Carol, who described the fight they participated in against racists trying to drive a Black family out of the Trumbull Park housing project in racially segregated Chicago in the mid-1950s. Responding to comments about the party's current work among meatpackers, DeBerry noted that he had worked in the big packing plants in Chicago. He beamed with enthusiasm when informed of the *Militant's* fall circulation drive success in more than doubling the initial quota that supporters of the paper had set.

SWP national secretary Jack Barnes will be among the speakers at the April 29 meeting here, at a time and place to be announced. Those wishing to send messages to the meeting may do so by email to the SWP at swpsf@sbcglobal.net or by postal mail at 3926 Mission St. (front office), San Francisco, CA 94112.

Betsey Stone contributed to this article.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

April 10, 1981

TOLEDO—Black firefighters here, laid off by the city administration since last June, won a victory when the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled March 3 that the city must uphold the proportion of Black firefighters in the total force.

The ruling means that the city will not be able to lay off the Black firefighters strictly according to seniority. Since the Blacks were among the last hired by the department, layoff by seniority would have meant they would have been the first fired. The city's firefighting force would have remained overwhelmingly white.

However, said the court's opinion, a lower court acted correctly in setting aside the fire department's seniority system if that system is "an obstacle to the city of Toledo's duty to eliminate past discrimination."

As a net result of the court order, thirty-four people will be rehired.

The victory sets a legal precedent for challenging the discriminatory firing practices of the bosses, by which minorities and women are always last hired and first fired.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

April 9, 1956

In another "brink of war" statement, Secretary of State Dulles said, April 3, that "in an emergency in the Middle East" United States forces might be sent into action without authority of Congress.

The Sixth U.S. Fleet is already stationed in the Eastern Mediterranean. Recently, the Eisenhower Administration sent an additional 1,800 Marines to re-enforce it. With the rise of the national independence movement of the Arab peoples, spearheaded by the Egyptian government, U.S., British and French imperialism—the overlords of the area—are getting increasingly itchy to intervene. The oil trusts have huge stakes in the Middle Eastern area and the State Department is ready to sacrifice untold numbers of lives—Arab, Israeli, French, English and American—to prevent the Arab peoples from reclaiming their own oil resources.

U.S. troops are posted all over the world—including the areas where the colonial revolution is at intense pitch. Under these conditions, it is not at all difficult when it suits Big Business' needs to claim they have been attacked and to precipitate a "police action."

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America (Opposition)

April 1, 1931

Could victory in a struggle for realizing the six hour work day appear within the realm of practical possibility to the American workers today? The answer must be "Yes." One need only remember that already in 1922 the United Mine Workers convention, by rank and file pressure, adopted a program of fight for the six hour work day. At this moment within the various conservative railroad unions there is developing a demand for the six hour work day without reduction in pay.

It is, however, primarily as an offensive slogan for the coming rising labor movement that the demand for the six hour work day without reduction in pay assumes its real importance. Secondly, it can become a powerful means of unifying the working masses, employed and unemployed alike, and set them into motion against their class enemy. Thirdly, it corresponds with the working class needs today. Particularly in the industrially highly developed United States has machine production reached such a stage that the very right to live for millions of workers becomes bound up with a drastic reduction of the present working day.

‘Cuba shows socialist revolution is possible’

Atlanta event promotes book by Chinese-Cuban generals

BY MAGGIE TROWE AND GREGG SCHMIDT

ATLANTA—Seventy-five people attended an evening meeting at Spelman College here March 25 to discuss reading, selling, and using Pathfinder’s newest book, *Our History is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* (see ad below).

Based on interviews with Cuban generals Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong, the book covers a wide range of subjects. These include the revolutionary struggle that culminated on Jan. 1, 1959, when workers and peasants overthrew a U.S.-backed dictatorship and went on to establish their own government, overthrow capitalism, and begin building a socialist society; Chinese immigration to Cuba; the historic role of Cuban volunteer forces in Angola from 1975 to 1991 in defeating invasions of that country by the racist apartheid regime of South Africa; and Cuban internationalist missions today in Venezuela and other countries.

Participants hailed from Birmingham, Alabama; Houston; Miami and Tampa, Florida; and North and South Carolina. Many came from the Atlanta area. It was the first of four such regional meetings (see front-page ad).

Speakers included Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the book and a member of the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party; José Martínez, secretary of the Bolivarian Circle in Miami, who was a combatant in the Cuban Revolution and a member of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces; and Jacob Perasso, representative of the Young Socialists and a leader of the SWP’s trade union work.

The event was co-chaired by Ellie García, chairperson of the Atlanta SWP, and Omari Musa, SWP candidate for mayor of Miami in 2005.

García talked about some of the activities socialist workers and young socialists in the region had been involved in recent days, including an action demanding immigrant rights the previous day. She noted that 20,000 people had turned out for a similar march in her hometown, Phoenix, March 24. She pointed to the impact that demonstration had had on her 77-year-old father, who had long insisted he was a Chicano not a Mexican. “Yesterday he was proud to be mexicano,” García told the audience.

Musa welcomed Sobukwe Shukura, co-chair of the National Network on Cuba, and James Gillam, professor of Chinese history at Spelman, and introduced them to the gathering.

Book needed by workers in struggle

“Working people in this country are radicalizing slowly but surely in a situation where the organized labor movement continues to weaken just as class-struggle unions are needed more than ever,” said Perasso, who recently visited Utah where he met with coal miners who have been fighting to unionize for the last two years. Perasso said pro-union miners need to read a book like *Our History Is Still Being Written*, which describes how in practice revolutionary struggles can be fought and won.

“The single biggest question for the working class is the leadership question,” Perasso said. “We need to prove our self-worth to ourselves in the class struggle.” Because the new book gives a concrete example of such leadership development, he said, it “is indispensable for young people trying to understand revolutionary politics today.”

Perasso urged those present to build and attend the May 20 “Hands Off Venezuela and Cuba!” demonstration in Washington.

“Despite all attempts of the United States and its lackeys in Europe to destroy the Cuban Revolution, that has been impossible,” Martínez said. Cuban revolutionaries “were able to defeat the enemy not only in Cuban territory but in African territory,” he said, referring to the victory in Angola against the apartheid forces. “If you want to know how Cuba has survived and how it continues to survive and win, you must read the book.”



Militant/Dave Wulp

Speakers at the March 25 event launching Pathfinder’s *Our History Is Still Being Written* at Spelman College in Atlanta. From left: Mary-Alice Waters (speaking), Omari Musa, Jacob Perasso, and José Martínez.

Socialist revolution is possible

Waters began her talk by saluting the Cuban baseball team, which recently placed second in the World Baseball Classic. She noted that some journalists were incredulous that there were no defectors from the Cuban team, when most Cuban players could obtain multimillion-dollar contracts with U.S. professional teams if they defected.

“Why were there no defectors?” Waters asked. “It is for the same reason that Cuban volunteers go around the world to give medical service in Venezuela and other countries that request it, and why so many Cubans volunteered for military service in Angola.”

Waters returned to the example of the Cuban volunteer doctors later in the program, noting their contributions in the region of Pakistan devastated by an earthquake last year. She said many of the areas there can only be reached by foot. Cuban doctors there, the majority of whom are women, are providing medical care in places where many Pakistani rescue crews thought it was impossible to get to.

Our History is Still Being Written addresses questions such as whether a socialist revolution is possible, and why what has happened in Cuba is so different from what happened in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, Waters explained.

“The main point of tonight’s meeting is to get you interested in this book,” she continued, “Not only in reading it, but in using it as a tool. It is a genuine introduction to the Cuban Revolution, to the men and women who made that revolution and to those who continue to write that history today.

“In this book you see the creative joy of the Cuban people as they tear down the old racist and exploitive relations and build new class relations, a task more difficult than making the revolution or pushing back the U.S. attack at Playa Giron in 1961,” she said.

Chinese in independence struggle

Waters contrasted the integration of Chinese indentured laborers into the Cuban independence struggle in the 19th century, which the book describes, to the anti-Chinese racist exclusion laws passed by the U.S. Congress following the defeat of the post–Civil War Radical Reconstruction. During that period many Chinese left this country to go to Cuba, she said.

Waters noted that in her recent participation in the Havana International Book Fair and at meetings across the island to promote and discuss the new book, she was struck by two things.

One was the sense of relief and guarded optimism on the part of Cuban working people in light of improving economic conditions and a sense that the “Special Period” is behind us. This is the term used in Cuba to describe the period of a formidable economic crisis triggered in the early 1990s with the abrupt cutoff of aid and trade on preferential terms with the former Soviet Bloc countries.

The second was “the seriousness of the national mood” about international challenges, Waters said. While expressing satisfaction with the advances of the people of Venezuela, at the same time many Cubans know that decisive tests remain, with capitalist property still firmly ensconced in that country. They know that Cuba will be targeted by the imperialist enemy along with Venezuela as the popular struggles there deepen. They are keenly aware of the mounting threats by U.S. imperialism against Iran, focused on that country’s nuclear energy program.

A lively discussion period followed the talks. Among those who participated was Genaro Pérez, 28, a Guatemala-born supermarket worker from Atlanta, who noted that “this book gives us the story of how Cuba has confronted the fight against capitalism.”

Maceo Dixon, a volunteer who helps lead Pathfinder’s distribution center in Atlanta, reported that he and others had sold 22 copies of the book at the three-day Association for Asian American Studies conference that had just concluded here (see article on page 7).

Kenya Evans, a 19-year-old sophomore at Spelman College, got news of the meeting from her class in world politics. “A lot was new to me, because I’ve never thought of applying the Cuban Revolution to the situation in America,” Evans said.

Young Socialists meeting

The following day Young Socialists from Atlanta and Tampa met with YS leaders Jacob Perasso and Olympia Newton to discuss working with others to build and participate in the May 20 demonstration and other activities.

The youth at that meeting also discussed organizing and participating in YS-sponsored classes in New York, Chicago, St. Paul, Minnesota, and elsewhere this summer. Those taking part in this program will also be campaigning to get SWP candidates on the ballot in many cities and to collectively study questions important to understanding developments in the class struggle today.

‘We’re workers, not criminals’

Seattle (700)
Minneapolis (1,000)
Milwaukee (10,000)
Boston (3,000)
New York (500)
Trenton (1,500)
Philadelphia (1,000)
Georgetown, DE (2,000)
Santa Rosa, CA (5,000)
Salt Lake City (750)
Chicago (100,000)
Detroit (4,000)
Columbus, OH (3,000)
San Francisco (2,000)
Denver (50,000)
Washington DC (20,000)
Los Angeles (500,000) [40,000 HS walkout]
Charlotte, NC (6,000)
Phoenix (20,000)
Atlanta [80,000 take day off]
Tucson (800)
Dallas (2,000) [1,500 HS walkout]
Houston (6,000) [400 HS walkout]
Miami (500)

Cities where most of the largest immigrant rights protests have been held so far.

City	*Size of protest*
Atlanta	80,000 take day off
Boston	3,000
Charlotte, NC	6,000
Chicago	100,000
Columbus, OH	3,000
Dallas	2,000
Denver	50,000
Detroit	4,000
Georgetown, DE	2,000
Houston	6,000
Los Angeles	500,000
L.A. students	40,000
Miami	500
Milwaukee	10,000
Minneapolis	1,000
New York	500
Phoenix	20,000
Philadelphia	1,000
Salt Lake City	750
San Francisco	2,000
Santa Rosa, CA	5,000
Seattle	700
Trenton, NJ	1,500
Tucson	800
Washington	20,000

Continued from front page

only filled that thoroughfare but moved up three adjacent streets as well.

“We’re fighting for all of us,” said Federico Angel Simón, a farm worker originally from Mexico, who came with co-workers from the San Joaquin Valley. “I hope they listen to the voice of the people in the White House.”

“We just want to work and advance,” said Arely Díaz, a restaurant worker who was born in El Salvador, explaining why she and her family were marching for the first time.

Workers at a dental office on Broadway and 5th Street kept running to the window and yelling “*Sí se puede*” (Yes, we can) and then put signs in the window with that slogan, to show their support for the hours-long procession.

“On the morning of the march in the garment shop where I work, co-workers sewed shirts for those who forgot to wear white,” which organizers had asked for, said Arlene Rubinstein. “One worker brought her children, another his sister and girlfriend. From the window, we saw workers from the Fashion District walking to the assembly point. We couldn’t wait any longer, stopped sewing, and left.”

The day before, hundreds of students walked out of Huntington Park, Garfield, Roosevelt, and Montebello high schools to oppose HR 4437. At other schools with large numbers of Latino students, the administration imposed a “lock down” to prevent students from leaving.

Christian Aguilar, a Bell High School student, described how teachers there tried to keep students in. Eventually a couple of hundred climbed the fence and walked to South Gate High School, where students were locked in. “A lot of people joined us on the way, including mothers carrying Mexican flags,” said Aguilar. “We were protesting this anti-immigrant law—it’s not fair.”

Debate on ‘immigration reform’

Rally organizers—including immigrant rights groups, unions, and Democratic Party politicians—called the actions to oppose the Sensenbrenner bill and promote variants such as the Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act, referred to as the McCain-Kennedy bill, after its sponsors, U.S. senators John McCain, a Republican, and Edward Kennedy, a Democrat.

At the rally, Los Angeles mayor Antonio Villaraigosa urged participants to “join McCain and Kennedy for real immigration reform.” Villaraigosa told CNN after the march that the bill “addresses the issue of border security and enforcing our immigration laws.” He added, “It also gives these 11 million people… if they’ve worked here, played by the rules, an avenue for earned legalization.”

The McCain-Kennedy bill would allow the government to control the inflow of a pool of laborers—called “guest workers”—who have fewer protections than other workers. Under the law, undocumented workers already in the country would have to pay a fine and application fees in order to get a temporary work visa good for six years. Workers in the program would be eligible to apply for permanent residency after working as a “guest worker” for six years and paying a second fine. Throughout their term as guest workers, they would be required to maintain their employment, effectively tying their status to their employer.

The Sensenbrenner bill—officially known as the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act—would make it a crime to be an undocumented immigrant, or to “aid” or “counsel” them. It also projects expanding the wall that Washington is constructing along the border with Mexico.

The U.S. ruling class has been surprised at the confidence and depth of the outpouring among immigrant workers, outraged and insulted by this proposal to criminalize them. These included mobilizations over the last few days of at least 50,000 in Denver; 20,000 in Phoenix; 10,000 in Milwaukee; 6,000 in Charlotte, North Carolina; 6,000 in Houston, and rallies that drew hundreds in many other cities. In Georgia, organizers report that as many as 80,000 people participated in the “Day of Dignity” economic boycott March 24, refusing to go to work or spend money. More than 100,000 took off work to join a weekday demonstration in Chicago on March 10. (See chart on this page.)

On March 27, in the middle of this outpouring of opposition, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved with a 12-6 vote new immigration legislation, which it sent to the full Senate for debate. The panel voted to eliminate the provisions of the Sensenbrenner bill that would criminalize undocumented immigrants and those who help them in any way. This bill, which is backed by the committee’s chairman, Republican Arlen Specter, is similar to the McCain-Kennedy proposal.

It would allow undocumented immigrants already here to apply for permanent residence and citizenship after overcoming many hurdles during an 11-year period. Those who have entered the United States as of the end of 2004 would be allowed to work for six years under a temporary worker program after paying a $1,000 fine and passing a criminal background check. Anyone who remains unemployed for more than 60 days would be forced to leave the country. Those who make it through this period would be able to apply for permanent residence after paying another $1,000 fine and any back taxes they owe, and show proficiency in English. They could then apply for citizenship five years later.

An additional 400,000 visas would be offered each year to those living in other countries for temporary jobs that employers say U.S.-born workers don’t want. In addition, the bill calls for another special “guest worker” program for some 1.5 million farm workers over the next five years.

The bill would beef up border patrols, adding up to 14,000 immigration cops the next half decade to the existing force of 11,300. It would also speed up deportations.

This bill also dropped the provision for building a 700-mile-long fence across the entire border with Mexico, which President Bush has publicly opposed. A proposal by Republican senators Jon Kyl of Arizona and John Cornyn of Texas that would require “guest workers” to return home before applying for permanent residence was not included in the bill.

The March 29 *New York Times* reported that immigration authorities had sent a letter to the United Food and Commercial Workers March 17 announcing discontinuation of sting operations that use health and safety programs to round up undocumented workers.

Discussion, protests continue

At American Apparel, a large garment factory in downtown Los Angeles, the mood was jubilant on the Monday after the march. People held up the newspaper *Hoy* with pictures of the demonstration and the banner headline “*!Sí se pudo!*” (Yes we could.)

Martín Alvarez said, “This will go down as a historic date. It made me feel wonderful to see so many Hispanics united fighting for our rights as immigrants.”

“There were more than a million there and if they don’t stop the attacks there will be other bigger marches,” added Andrés Rodríguez. “And there was a whole contingent of Koreans there too.”

Ledia Rosales said her daughter Zuri carried a sign that had a picture of the Honduran flag with the words “*Cien porciento Latina*” (100 percent Latina). Another marcher liked it so much she offered to buy it for $5.

Laura Diezmo said this was the first march she had ever attended. “It made me feel strong. I could feel the force of all those Latinos. I really liked the chant ‘Sí se puede,’ and I was happy to see quite a few white folks and Afro-Americans supporting the march. Some workers in the buildings downtown put up signs saying no to HR 4437.”

Protests are continuing. Several thousand people, many of them farm workers from throughout California, rallied downtown March 26 in an action called by the United Farm Workers to commemorate César Chávez and oppose anti-immigrant legislation.

Nearly 40,000 students walked out of their classes in more than 50 schools throughout Southern California March 27, denouncing HR 4437. Students marched in various areas, in some cases blocking traffic, and about 2,000 rallied at City Hall. Mayor Villaraigosa addressed the students, saying he supported their cause but they should go back to school. His appeal had little success.

More mobilizations are planned. A national day of action has been called for April 10 in cities across the country.

Wendy Lyons contributed to this article.

‘Our History’ at Asian American Studies event

BY BILL ARTH

ATLANTA—A team of volunteers staffed a booth displaying books published by Pathfinder Press at the March 22–26 meeting of the Association for Asian American Studies. More than 400 professors and students registered for the conference. Workshops covered topics related to the Asian diaspora, responsibilities of Asian American academics in world politics, labor migration to the United States, conditions facing Asian American women, and much more.

The Pathfinder booth included a broad range of titles, and highlighted its numerous books on the Cuban Revolution. Of special interest to the participants was the new Pathfinder title, *Our History is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution.* A total of 22 copies were sold at the conference.

One professor who purchased a copy said that he had recently written a book on the immigration of Chinese workers from Cuba to Louisiana to work on sugar plantations in the 19th Century, and was glad to see a book on the little-documented Chinese immigration to Cuba. Many of the scholars who visited the booth noted how little had been written on this subject.

Numerous conference participants signed up for follow-up visits from Pathfinder sales representatives to discuss classroom adoptions and library acquisitions of the new book and other Pathfinder titles.

Jim Rogers, Jeff Powers, and Gale Shangold contributed to this article.

Only socialist revolution can prevent imperialist wars

Below is an excerpt from Socialism On Trial, *one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. On the eve of World War II, 18 leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and the Minneapolis Teamsters union were tried and convicted of "conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government."* Socialism On Trial *is the official record of the testimony of the one of the central defendants, James P. Cannon, then national secretary of the SWP. It is a clear and simple explanation of the principles and aims of revolutionary socialism and has become a classic of communist literature.*

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

Q: (By Mr. Goldman): Mr. Cannon, will you tell us the position of the Socialist Workers Party on the causes of modern war?

A: Modern wars, in the opinion of our party, are caused by the conflict of imperialist nations for markets, colonies, sources of raw material, fields for investment, and spheres of influence.

Q: What do you mean by "imperialist," Mr. Cannon?

A: Those capitalist nations which directly or indirectly exploit other countries.



Fifteen of the 18 Smith Act defendants surrender to U.S. marshals (far right), December 1943, to begin serving their sentences. From left: Jake Cooper, Ed Palmquist, Clarence Hamel (face hidden), Emil Hansen, Harry DeBoer, Max Geldman, Carlos Hudson, Grace Carlson, Felix Morrow, Farrell Dobbs, Albert Goldman, Carl Skoglund, Oscar Coover Sr., James P. Cannon, and V.R. Dunne.

Q: What is the party's position on the inevitability of wars under the capitalist system?

A: As long as the capitalist system remains, and with it those conditions which I have mentioned, which flow automatically from the operation of the capitalist and imperialist system, wars, recurring wars, are inevitable.

Q: And can anybody's opposition, including the opposition of the Socialist Workers Party to war, prevent wars under the capitalist system?

A: No. Our party has always stated that it is impossible to prevent wars without abolishing the capitalist system which breeds war. It may be possible to delay a war for a while, but eventually it is impossible to prevent wars while this system, and its conflicts of imperialist nations, remains.

Q: Then is it true that the party is of the opinion that wars are caused by international economic conflicts, and not by the good will or bad will of some people?

A: Yes. That does not eliminate the possibility of incidental attacks being caused by the acts of this or that ruling group of one country or another; but fundamentally wars are caused by the efforts of all the capitalist powers to expand into other fields. The only way they can get them is by taking them away from some other power, because the whole world has been divided up among a small group of imperialist powers. That is what leads to war, regardless of the will of the people.

We do not maintain that the ruling groups of any of the imperialist powers now at war really desired the war. We have stated many times that they would have been glad to have avoided it; but they could not avoid it and maintain the capitalist system in their country.…

Q: What was the party's position with reference to amending the Constitution to give the people the power to declare war?

A: For quite a while now we have supported the proposal that was introduced into Congress, I think by Representative Ludlow, and is known as the Ludlow Amendment, for an amendment to the Constitution requiring a referendum vote of the people for the declaration of a war. Our party supported this proposal and at times has carried on a very energetic agitation in favor of such an amendment to require a referendum vote of the people before war could be declared….

Q: What kind of a war would you consider a war waged by the present government of the United States?

A: I would consider it a capitalist war.

Q: Why?

A: Because America is today a capitalist nation. It is different from the others only in that it is stronger than the others and bigger. We do not believe in capitalist policy. We do not want to gain any colonies. We do not want bloodshed to make profits for American capital.

Q: What is the party's position on the claim that the war against Hitler is a war of democracy against fascism?

A: We say that is a subterfuge, that the conflict between American imperialism and German imperialism is for the domination of the world. It is absolutely true that Hitler wants to dominate the world, but we think it is equally true that the ruling group of American capitalists has the same idea, and we are not in favor of either of them.

We do not think that the Sixty Families who own America want to wage this war for some sacred principle of democracy: We think they are the greatest enemies of democracy here at home. We think they would only use the opportunity of a war to eliminate all civil liberties at home, to get the best imitation of fascism they can possibly get.

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EDITORIAL

Immigrant workers affect their destiny

Immigrant workers, many of them undocumented, are affecting their destiny as more than a million of them and their supporters have poured into the streets in city after city—and in some cases, like Atlanta, have simply taken a day off work en masse—to oppose anti-immigrant measures. This is the only effective lobbying working people have.

Self-confidence and pride in hailing from Mexico or other nations is up. Fear of employers or the immigration cops is down. As Jesús Hernández, one of 33 workers fired from the Universal Form Clamp plant in Bellwood, Illinois, for joining the 100,000-strong mobilization for immigrant rights in Chicago March 10, told the press, "The march was exactly for what we are here today, for our rights to be respected." After standing up for themselves, all 33 got their jobs back.

And there are other victories, partial but meaningful for the 12 million undocumented immigrants in the United States. On March 17, the Department of Homeland Security's immigration division announced it would end its practice of using fake workplace safety meetings as sting operations to round up and arrest undocumented workers. A proposal that would require "guest workers," after working six years as temporaries, to return to their country of origin before applying for permanent residency was not included in the bill the Senate Judiciary Committee approved, two days after more than half a million marched in Los Angeles.

The wind may be blowing against the Sensenbrenner bill the House of Representatives approved in December, which includes provisions that have justifiably outraged immigrant workers, such as criminalizing all the undocumented and those aiding them.

All the "immigration reform" proposals debated in Congress, like the McCain-Kennedy bill—touted by many capitalist politicians as a pro-immigrant alternative to the Sensenbrenner proposal—or its variant the Senate Judiciary Committee just passed, are aimed at perpetuating divisions in the working class. The goal of these bills is not to expel those without papers or to slow down immigration. Not only is that impossible—the number of the undocumented has reached 5 percent of the workforce—but the U.S. bosses need immigrant labor to maintain their edge over foreign competitors. Their purpose, as our March 27 editorial said, is to maintain a more vulnerable section of the workforce to assure bosses a pool of superexploited labor and fatten their profits.

The working class in the United States has become more internationalized and thus strengthened as immigrant workers become more integrated into society. Working people have reason to celebrate and get encouragement from the sea of Mexican and other flags that recently filled the streets of Los Angeles, proving California is becoming as much a part of Mexico as the United States. Now is the time for the labor movement to demand that all undocumented workers get immediate permanent residency. Now is the time to press for organizing all workers, native- and foreign-born, into trade unions to fight the employers' attacks on the wages, job conditions, and dignity of all working people. Now is the time to build and join the mobilizations for immigrant rights continuing through the national day of action on April 10.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

ALABAMA
Birmingham
Farmer-to-Farmer Solidarity: Report-back from Mississippi Farm Conference. Speaker: Karl Butts, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 7, 7:30 p.m. *3029A Bessemer Rd. Tel.: (205) 780-0021.*

ILLINOIS
Chicago
South Dakota Abortion Ban: Defend and Extend Women's Right to Choose Abortion! Fri., April 7. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. *Both events at: 3557 S. Archer St. Tel.: (773) 890-1190.*

MASSACHUSETTS
Boston
The Iraq War and Transformation of U.S. Military: Why Working People Should Demand U.S. Troops Out. Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April, 7:00 p.m. *13 Bennington St., 2nd Floor. Tel.: (617) 569-9169.*

NEW JERSEY
Newark
Puerto Rico's Fight Against Colonialism. Speaker: Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 7, 8:00 p.m. *168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd Floor. Tel.: (973) 481-0077.*

NEW YORK
Manhattan
Support Fight for Puerto Rican Independence. Speakers: Ben O'Shaugnessey, Young Socialists; Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 7. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. *Both events at: 307 W. 36th St., 10th floor (near 8th Ave., use north set of elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.*

WASHINGTON
Seattle
Working Class Response to Employers' Immigration "Reform." Speaker: David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 7. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5 dinner, $5 program. *5418 Rainer Ave. South. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.*

SWEDEN
Stockholm
The Myth of the "Neoconservative Conspiracy." Fri., April 7, 7:00 p.m. *Bildhuggarvägen 17 Johanneshov. Tel.: +46 8 31 69 33*

CALENDAR

NEW YORK
Manhattan
Afro Venezuelans Assess African Roots. Hear Jesus "Chucho" Garcia, writer on Afro-Latino issues, and Vice-Minister of Venezuela for Foreign Affairs for Africa; Hon. Reinaldo Bolivar. Wed., April 5. 6:00 p.m. *NAC Building City College, CUNY 138 Convent Ave. Tel: (212) 696-6630.*

LETTERS

'Slavery in New York' I

The article in the March 13 issue by Arrin Hawkins about the exhibit in New York showing how that city was built on slave labor was very interesting. I sure wish they could put it on tour and bring it to the West Coast.

The point Hawkins makes on "how integral the institution of slavery was in the development of New York City" is correct. Not only about its physical building and infrastructure but also its development as a commercial center trading slaves, slave-grown cotton, and the outfitting of slave-running ships. In January 1861, on the very cusp of the Civil War, the mayor of New York City proposed that the city secede from the United States because cutting off ties to the southern states would financially ruin it. More than a few "princes of commerce" were sympathetic to this view.

So although slavery in New York was abolished in 1827 activity covering all aspects of that trade, legal and illegal, played a central role in the city's economy right up to the war.

Dean Hazlewood
Los Angeles, California

'Slavery in New York' II

I agree that "Slavery in New York" exposes a side of northern history ignored or unknown. But the exhibit's overall tone is self-congratulatory. The message of its corporate sponsors is that the "peculiar institution" came to an end in New York decades before it did in the South, because of the actions of enlightened elites.

Such a misrepresentation of reality explains why at the end of the exhibit there is only brief mention of the fact that at the same time slavery was being officially phased out, the 1820s, the franchise was taken away from Black men in New York. Commercial capital there consolidated its alliance with the slave owners in the South.

Only with the revolutionary outcome of the Civil War, however, did Black people in New York, as elsewhere, become, until the overthrow of Radical Reconstruction, real citizens of the United States for the first time. Masses of toilers in arms, both Black and white, were decisive in the actual overthrow of slavery—not what the exhibit would like viewers to recognize.

August Nimtz
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Decolonization

Continued from front page

porters of Puerto Rico's independence from U.S. colonial rule.

Ramón Nenadich, president of CONADE and a social science professor at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR), told the audience the purpose of the meeting is to begin a process of bringing together people from a broad spectrum of political viewpoints who agree that Puerto Rico's colonial status must end and to chart initial steps toward that goal. The event was endorsed by the deans of the UPR schools of social sciences, law, humanities, and other prominent academic figures.

The meeting began with a Taíno Indian ceremony by a local cultural group, followed by greetings by Venezuelan consul Vinicio Romero on behalf of Venezuela's president, Hugo Chávez.

Antonio Camacho, organizational coordinator of CONADE, said his group is organizing a Puerto Rico solidarity brigade to Venezuela, called the Antonio Valero de Bernabé Brigade, named after a Puerto Rican general who fought in South America's wars of independence. He also announced that CONADE is working to negotiate an agreement with the Venezuelan government to sell fuel in Puerto Rico at subsidized prices.

Camacho acknowledged the presence in the audience of several former political prisoners, including Carmen Valentín and José Solís. Like them, Camacho himself was framed up by the FBI and spent years in U.S. prisons because of his activities on behalf of Puerto Rican independence. He also called for the release of the four independence fighters still locked up—Oscar López, Carlos Alberto Torres, Haydée Beltrán, and José Pérez González.

He paid tribute to some of the historic leaders of Puerto Rico's struggle for independence. These include Ramón Betances and Eugenio María de Hostos, who led the 19th century fight against Spanish rule; Pedro Albizu Campos, leader of the Nationalist Party from the 1930s to the '50s; Blanca Canales, a heroine of the 1950 Nationalist-led uprising; and the five Nationalist heroes who spent a quarter-century in U.S. prisons, including Rafael Cancel Miranda and Lolita Lebrón. He honored Filiberto Ojeda Ríos, a leader of the pro-independence group Macheteros who was killed in his home by FBI agents last September.

More than half a dozen speakers, all of whom teach at the UPR, gave presentations on the opening day of the conference—including Aarón Gamaliel Ramos, Angel Israel Rivera, and Mari Ramos.

Arrest of Camacho

Continued from front page

shortly after the end of the opening day of the First National Congress for Decolonization, of which he is one of the main organizers (see article above). FBI officials told the press they arrested him for a parole violation dating back to August 2004—a year and a half ago.

Ramón Nenadich, one of the organizers of the Congress, joined in demanding that U.S. authorities immediately release Camacho. He noted the timing of the arrest—in the middle of a conference on the fight to end U.S. colonial rule of Puerto Rico—and vowed that the U.S. cops' actions would not disrupt the event. The FBI's attacks on the independence movement and protests against them have been in the news in recent days. Demonstrations have continued against the federal cops' killing of *independentista* leader Filiberto Ojeda Ríos last September and the FBI raids in February on the homes of several independence supporters.

Camacho spent 15 years in U.S. prisons because of his pro-independence actions. He was released and rearrested twice before, because of his refusal to recognize the U.S. government's onerous parole conditions, including a bar on contacts with fellow independence fighters who have served federal sentences. He was most recently let out of prison in August 2004. (For more information on his fight see "'My trench in fighting imperialism: independence struggle': Interview with Puerto Rican independence fighter Antonio Camacho Negrón" in January 16 *Militant.*)

The New York-based Puerto Rican pro-independence group ProLibertad has also called a protest to demand Camacho's release. It will take place at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 31, at 26 Federal Plaza in lower Manhattan. For more information call (718) 601-4751.